

DATA ACQUISITION AND PROCESSING IN BIOLOGY IN MEDICINE. Proceedings of the 1961 Rochester Conference. Edited by Kurt Enslein. (Pp. viii + 191; illustrated. 50s.) Oxford, London, New York, and Paris: Pergamon Press, 1962.

THESE papers and their brief discussion are concerned with some aspects of computers in biology, medicine and psychiatry, pattern recognition, clinical and research instrumentation for biological systems and instrumentation for ECG, EEG and EPG.

The book as a whole is probably beyond the critical competence of any one worker, though experts in special fields shown it have not found the level of presentation very advanced.

Those concerned with the production and especially with the analysis of large amounts of biological data will find something of interest, but the field covered is wide and they should expect general stimulus rather than specific help.

EVOLUTION AND ILLNESS. By R. M. J. Harper, M.A., D.M.(Oxon). (Pp. vii + 108; plates 35. 25s.) Edinburgh and London: E. & S. Livingstone, 1962.

THE author is interested in such common structures in human skin as pigmented moles and supernumerary breasts and believes a relationship exists between such developmental aspects of human anatomy and the manifestations of disease. He suggests that "... the increased activity of the great brain of man may lead to disease based upon obsolete nervous and endocrine reflex defence patterns of a comparable date to the archaic vestiges of evolution known to exist in human skin."

There is an interesting chapter on the supernumerary nipple, but whether the chapter on the pigmented naevus with its uncritical acceptance of the viewpoint of Pierre Masson does anything to support the thesis is debatable. There is a discussion of clinical material and some supporting data. The reader should not be over-impressed by the comparative morphology discussed. He should remain critical and decide for himself if the thesis is supported by the clinical data or if this is futile speculation over mere coincidence.

NUTRITION AND DIETETICS FOR NURSES. By Mary E. Beck. (Pp. viii + 224. Illustrated. 21s.) Edinburgh and London: E. & S. Livingstone, 1962.

THIS is an excellent book; it is clear, concise and accurate, well written and well illustrated. Miss Beck deals with the physiological basis of nutrition, gives good advice on the feeding of healthy people in childhood, adult life and pregnancy, and gives a clear account of the diet needed in the treatment of obesity and in conditions commonly seen in medical and surgical wards. She deals very fully with the diet of diabetic patients and of patients with those rare conditions, coeliac disease, galactoxæmia and phenylketonuria, where health depends so greatly on skilled dietetics. She touches briefly on international problems of nutrition, on food preparation and on food hygiene.

This book is meant for nurses, but medical students will find it much more interesting and useful than the rather stodgy sections on nutrition and dietetics that tradition demands should be included in textbooks on physiology and therapeutics.

O. L. W.

THE FOUNDATIONS OF SURGERY. By George Perkins, M.Ch., F.R.C.S. Second Edition. (Pp. viii + 236. 12s. 6d.) Edinburgh and London: E. & S. Livingstone, 1962.

THIS is an excellent little book for students entering surgical wards for the first time. It contains useful and pithy comments about many of the basic aspects of surgery and provides a good guide to the examination of most parts of the body with which surgeons are primarily concerned. There is, however, no account of the heart, chest or central nervous system (apart from a short chapter on injury to the head). As might be expected of an orthopædic surgeon, the sections on the skeleton, joints, bones, muscles and peripheral nerves are the longest and the best. Perhaps only an orthopædic surgeon could have coined the wonderfully descriptive term "breast mouse" for a mammary fibro-adenoma!

R. B. W.